

Quick & Easy Formative Assessments

Index Card

Give each student an index card. Ask them to write on both sides to answer the following:

Side 1: Based on our study of _____, list a big idea that you understand.

Side 2: Identify something about _____ that you do not yet fully understand.

One Minute Essay

A one minute essay question is focused with a specific goal that can actually be answered within a minute or two. Specific prompts are usually the most helpful.

Brain Dumps

A three minute pause gives students a chance to stop and reflect on what they've just been introduced to. This also lets them make connections to prior knowledge/experiences and to seek clarification. You can have students talk to a partner or write ideas down. Here are some prompts to use:

- "I felt..."
- "I changed my attitude about..."
- "I related to..."
- "I found it interesting that..."
- "One new thing I learned was..."
- "This reminds me of ..." (text to self, text to world, text to text)

Journal Entry

Students record their understanding of the topic, concept or lesson in a personal journal. The teacher reviews the journal entry and responds as needed. This provides a private place for students to express concerns or questions that they might not be comfortable sharing in public.

The key to this method of assessment is to actually read and respond to student journal entries. If the teacher doesn't respond, the students will be less inclined to be truthful and provide details of their understanding.

Hand Signals

Ask students to display a designated hand signal to indicate their understanding of a specific concept, principle or process. Examples include thumbs up/down and showing fingers on a scale of 1-5.

Concept Map

Any of several forms of graphic organizers that allow students to recognize the relationships between ideas through diagramming key words and phrases.

Examples include Venn diagrams, webs, etc.

Exit Card

Exit cards are written responses from each student that must be turned in before the end of the activity or the end of the day. They are "required" before a student can exit the class. Prompts may be general ("list one thing you didn't know about the topic before this lesson") or specific ("put the following steps in order"). You can ask students to write a response on a sticky tab, note card or piece of paper. Many teachers designate a space in their classroom where students must post or turn in responses.